

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 113508

LIMDIS; BANGKOK ALSO FOR ASST SECY HOLBROOKE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: XC

SUBJECT: WEEKLY STATUS REPORT -- THAILAND, INDONESIA,
MALAYSIA, BURMA AND SINGAPORE AFFAIRS

INDONESIA

SPEAKER FOR INDONESIAN PETROLEUM ASSOCIATION (LOU)

AFTER SERIOUS CONSIDERATION IN BOTH DOE INTERNATIONAL
AND EB FUELS AND ENERGY, IT DOES NOT APPEAR LIKELY THAT
A U.S. OFFICIAL WILL BE ABLE TO ADDRESS THE ANNUAL MEETING
OF THE INDONESIAN PETROLEUM ASSOCIATION IN JUNE. WE HAVE
PUSHED HARD FOR OFFICIAL PARTICIPATION FROM WASHINGTON
AND HAVE NOT ENTIRELY GIVEN UP, BUT WE ARE SUGGESTING
THAT THE GOI BE INFORMED THAT IT IS VERY UNCERTAIN.

PL-480 (CONF)
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THE PLAN TO GO TO CONGRESS FOR A PL 480, TITLE SUPPLE-
MENTAL APPROPRIATION TO COVER 100,000 TONS OF RICE FOR
INDONESIA AS WELL AS ADDITIONAL COMMODITIES FOR EGYPT
AND OTHER COUNTRIES WAS SCRAPPED LAST WEEK. THE WORD
RECEIVED FROM THE WHITE HOUSE WAS THAT NO SUPPLEMENTALS
WOULD BE CONSIDERED BECAUSE OF THE INFLATIONARY IMPACT

ON THE U.S. ECONOMY. FOLLOWING THIS A 17.5 MILLION DOLS (ESTIMATED 50,000 TONS) RICE PROGRAM FOR INDONESIA WAS WORKED OUT IN THE WHITE HOUSE JUST PRIOR TO THE VICE PRESIDENT'S DEPARTURE, IN CONNECTION WITH THE TALKING POINTS ON FOOD TRANSMITTED IN STATE 110198. WE HOPE THAT THE SEVERAL ELEMENTS OF THE THE EMBASSY CONCERNED WITH THE PL 480 PROGRAM WILL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO DISCUSS THIS GUIDANCE AND THE GENERAL QUESTION OF DEVELOPMENTAL IMPACT OF TITLE I WITH DAS HEGINBOTHAM WHILE HE IS IN JAKARTA.

PRESENT DETAILS ON THE FUNDING SOURCE FOR THE 50,000 TONS OR RICE (WHETHER FROM RESERVES OR FROM THE LOAN REPAYMENT ACCOUNT) HAVE YET TO BE WORKED OUT.

THAILAND/BURMA

AGREEMENT REQUESTED (CONF)

BOTH THE RTG AND GUB HAVE REQUESTED AGREEMENT FOR NEW AMBASSADORS TO THE UNITED STATES. WE ARE PREPARING THE REQUIRED CLASSIFIED BIOGRAPHIES AS THE FIRST STEP IN THE PROCESS.

THAILAND
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NATURAL GAS DEVELOPMENTS (LOU)

RTG-UNION OIL GAS PRICE NEGOTIATIONS CONTINUE ON UPBEAT NOTE WITH NEXT SESSION SCHEDULED IN MID-MAY. ALTHOUGH UNION OIL'S AND TEXAS-PACIFIC'S OFFSHORE DRILLING CONCESSIONS EXPIRED APRIL 23, THIS AWKWARD FACT HAS NOT DIRECTLY AFFECTED THE PRICE NEGOTIATIONS. THEIR PROPOSED WORK PROGRAMS FOR NEXT YEAR ARE BEING STUDIED BY RTG. THE HOUSTON-BASED FLUOR CORP EXPECTS TO OBTAIN THE DESIGN CONTRACT FOR GAS PIPELINE IN EARLY MAY WHILE CHASE-MANHATTAN BANK IS NOW CONSULTING NATURAL GAS ORGANIZATION OF THAILAND FOR FIRST TIME AS ITS FINANCIAL ADVISER.

BURMA

ARAKANESSE MUSLIM ISSUE (CONF)

BURMA ARMY EFFORTS TO ROOT OUT ILLEGAL RESIDENTS OF ARAKAN STATE HAVE RESULTED IN AN INFLUX OF A REPORTED 30-40,000 ARAKANE MUSLIMS INTO NEIGHBORING BANGLADESH.

IN ADDITION TO THE REFUGEE PROBLEM, THERE HAVE BEEN AT
LEAST FOUR INCIDENTS OF FIRING BETWEEN BURMESE AND

BANGLADESHI TROOPS AND THE BURMA ARMY REPORTEDLY CROSSED
OVER THE BORDER AND BURNED THREE BANGLADESHI VILLAGES
DURING AN OPERATION. ALTHOUGH RANGOON HAS EXPRESSED
REGRET FOR THE INCIDENT AND PROMISED COMPENSATION, RELA-
TIONS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES CONTINUE TO BE STRAINED.

NEITHER THE GUB NOR THE BDG HAS ASKED THE U.S. TO PLAY
ANY DIRECT ROLE IN RESOLVING THE ISSUE. IN A MESSAGE
TO OUR EMBASSIES WE HAVE, HOWEVER, REAFFIRMED OUR POSI-
TION OF NEUTRALITY IN THE DISPUTE AND SUGGESTED THAT WE
GIVE LOW KEY ENCOURAGEMENT TO THE GOVERNMENTS INVOLVED TO
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DISCUSS THE SITUATION AND ATTEMPT TO REACH AN ACCOMMODA-
TION WHICH TAKES INTO CONSIDERATION THE WELFARE OF THE
PEOPLE IN THE BORDER AREA. IN OUR MESSAGE WE HAVE ALSO
STATED OUR AGREEMENT THAT AN INTERNATIONAL UMBRELLA SHOULD
BE SOUGHT IF BANGLADESH APPEALS FOR HELP WITH THE REFUGEE
INFLUX.

MALAYSIA

MALAYSIAN OPPOSITION LEADER ARRESTED FOR VIOLATION OF
SECRECY ACTS (CONF)

LIM KIT SIANG, THE LEADER OF THE PARLIAMENTARY OPPOSITION
AND SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE DEMOCRATIC ACTION PARTY
(DAP), WAS ARRESTED APRIL 23 AND CHARGED WITH VIOLATIONS
OF THE OFFICIAL SECRETS ACT. IN 1976 LIM EVIDENTLY
RECEIVED CLASSIFIED INFORMATION FROM DISGRUNTLED DEFENSE
OFFICIALS WHO OBJECTED TO THE PURCHASE OF CERTAIN PATROL
BOATS. CONTENDING THAT HE WAS ATTEMPTING TO EXPOSE
CORRUPTION LIM MADE A SPEECH IN PARLIAMENT AND WROTE TO
THE FAR EASTERN ECONOMIC REVIEW EVIDENTLY DISCLOSING
SOME OF THE MATERIAL PROVIDED TO HIM. THE EMBASSY
OBSERVES THAT THE ARREST, COMING AT A TIME WHEN EARLY
ELECTIONS ARE WIDELY PREDICTED, HAS RAISED CHARGES OF
GOVERNMENT ATTEMPTS TO DISCREDIT THE OPPOSITION PRIOR
TO ELECTIONS. IF THIS IS THE CASE, THOUGH, THE POLITICAL
REPERCUSSIONS COULD AS EASILY HURT AS HELP THE GOVERNMENT
SIDE. OTHERS VIEW THE ARREST AND ITS TIMING AS THE
LOGICAL CULMINATION OF MONTHS OF THOROUGH INVESTIGATION
OF THE CASE. THE CASE WILL HAVE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON
LOCAL POLITICAL SCENE WITHOUT, HOWEVER, THREATENING THE
GOVERNING NATIONAL FRONT COALITION'S OVERALL CHANCES OF
WINNING THE COMING ELECTIONS.
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BAD WEATHER IN PEKING? (CONF)

EMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR REPORTS THAT FOREIGN MINISTER
RITHAUDDEEN'S PROJECTED SPRING TRIP TO PEKING HAS BEEN

POSTPONED INDEFINITELY. THE CHINESE SUGGESTED A MAY
VISIT IS NOT APPROPRIATE BECAUSE OF "THE WEATHER". THE
EMBASSY COMMENTS THAT THE POSTPONEMENT MAY HAVE BEEN
A MUTUAL DECISION GIVEN THE UNCERTAINTY OF THE TIMING
OF MALAYSIAN ELECTIONS. IT ALSO MEANS THAT THE GOM IS
NOT PLANNING TO MAKE POLITICAL CAPITAL OF THE VISIT
AMONG ETHNIC CHINESE VOTERS AS WAS DONE WITH THE LATE
PRIME MINISTER'S TRIP TO PEKING IN 1974.

SINGAPORE

SINGAPORE'S FOREIGN MINISTER ON RELATIONS WITH VIETNAMESE
(CONF)

EMBASSY SINGAPORE REPORTS THAT FOREIGN MINISTER
RAJARATNAM RECENTLY OBSERVED TO OUR AMBASSADOR THAT
HANOI WAS MOST ANXIOUS TO ESTABLISH RELATIONS WITH
SINGAPORE BUT THAT SINGAPORE HAD NOTHING TO GAIN BY
IT.

WHITE HOUSE ANNOUNCES NOMINATION OF GOVERNOR KNEIP TO
BECOME AMBASSADOR TO SINGAPORE (UNCL)

THE WHITE HOUSE ANNOUNCED MAY 2 THE PRESIDENT'S INTENTION
TO NOMINATE RICHARD F. KNEIP, GOVERNOR OF SOUTH DAKOTA,
AS THE NEXT AMBASSADOR TO SINGAPORE. CHRISTOPHER

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